

# The Athenian Mercury.

Quest. 1. Why the generality of Male or Female die in the Night?

Ans. We question the truth of the Observation, unless when the Moon happens to change then;— if at other times any such thing be, we are rather apt to believe, it happens for want of suitable assistance than any other more general or secret Reason.

Quest. 2. Why the naked Gospel, mention'd in the Gazette, July the 3d. shou'd be censur'd and burnt for an Heretical Pamphlet?

Ans. The Athenian Society have no mind to a Visitation, and therefore are resolv'd to let the Question alone to be decided at the day of Judgment.

Quest. 3. I hang'd a Cat lately in my Garden full of Kittens, and when she was a dying the Kittens cry'd within her. I demand whence they had Air to make that Sound?

Ans. We have had this Question before, however it being a diverting point, I shall further add, The more cruel— Rogue— you for your pains, thus with one Cord to destroy a whole Generation. But to answer your unanswerable Question, The truth of Fact we easily believe, the same accident having sometimes happen'd to Humane Births. But that there is Air in the Body, none ever question'd. Wind is a Degree more than Air, or Air compress'd;— this we are sure is in the Body, because it comes out on't. But this you'll say, is, not to talk like an Anatomist, nor would it be very civil to do so, only we'll say, that Nourishment being convey'd to the Fetus, Wind may be also, and no Effect is, as we see by the Childs being often injur'd by such windy Nourishment.

Quest. 4. Whether a Spiritual Substance hath distinct parts?

Ans. No distinct Physical parts, as a Body hath, for then 'twou'd be a Body; but Metaphysical, of Essence and Existence, &c. or such like may be granted;— we mean in such Spiritual Substances as admit of Composition, for there can be no Composition without different parts to be compounded. But in that most simple Being, the first uncompounded Essence, and Father of Spirits, those who allow any parts deserve as heavy an Anathema from Philosophy as Divinity has already given 'em.

Quest. 5. Whether the Seat of the Soul be in the Glandula Pinealis?

Ans. That the Soul operates in the Head in another manner than in any other part of the Body, and that the Function of Thinking or Reasoning is perform'd there, our very Senses do almost teach us, by that sort of pain which we feel there after any intense meditation; as we have formerly observ'd. There we say it must be, because there it operates, one of which unanswerably follows upon the other; but how it is we are as much to seek as how it operates, and where as how, if the precise point, or place be demanded, Monsieur des Cartes Opinion was generally embrac'd in the last Age, who finding that small Gland in the Head, which had no use by Anatomists assign'd thereto, he concluded it the Principal and Immediate Seat of the Soul, but later Anatomists have since found a much lower Office for it, and that Fancy of his is as much decry'd as it was heretofore almost universally embrac'd.

Quest. 6. Why shou'd a Blockhead have One out of Ten?

Ans. The Querist is beholding for that sharp thought to Mr. Bays his last Play, as Bays himself stole the only few good things there from Tasso's Poem of the Siege of Jerusalem, who being himself reputed a Blockhead to make a Parson of, has rail'd at 'em all with or without occasion ever since. But let the Wit be whose 'twill, we'll here answer it. The Question is, Why shou'd a Blockhead have One out of Ten? our answer is, For the same Reason that a greater Blockhead has the other Nine, and that is, because the Law gives it him.

Quest. 7. Whether the Queen of Sheba, if now living, might not receive as ample Satisfaction from our Modern Virtuosi in any of the Questions she propos'd, as she did from Solomon, and if so, whether he still deserves to be reputed the wisest of Men?

Ans. To the first part, we answer, No certain-

ly, for his Wisdom was inspir'd, as well as gotten by Observation, whereas our Philosophers have only the latter way of attaining it. If the Question had been, Whether Solomon might not be ignorant of many things which we now know, the case had been much alter'd; tho' this might even there be said, that we know not of any such Questions she propos'd to him; and besides that, many things we now know, and look upon as new Discoveries, Solomon might then be well acquainted with. There's scarce any new Invention in Philosophy has made such noise as that of Circulation, which yet some Ingenious Men, not improbably assert to be known to Solomon, and that he Enigmatically describes it in the 12th of Ecclesiastes, by the Wheel broken at the Cistern, however we are sure by his works he was excellently skill'd in Morality and some part of Natural Philosophy, which he had to that height, that he may still enjoy the Title of the Wisest Man.

Quest. 8. Why shou'd the putting a Man's Hand in cold Water occasion a sudden emission of Urine, notwithstanding his being fast asleep?

Ans. That [notwithstanding] has lost its way, for if at all it must be when a Man's asleep, otherwise he must have a care where he washes his Hands: Nor is there any difficulty in the Emission when sleeping, more than waking, as appears by their Sheets who have not the Retentive Faculty then, tho' at other times they are staunch enough. But we need not have wasted all these words about it, for we can assure the Reader, 'tis a perfect vulgar Error, as a thousand other receiv'd Opinions are, and has nothing at all of Truth in it, at least, in those Experiments which we have made about it.

Quest. 9. Where the Romish Infallibility besides during the vacancy of the Papal Chair? [This was propos'd and answered before the Choice was finish'd.]

Ans. Not in the Pope, for the last is in Purgatory, and his Successor not yet in Being. Nor in a General Council, for there's now no such thing;— not in Pope and General Council together, because there's neither of 'em in nature asunder: Not in the Universal particular Roman-Catholic Church, for the Eldest Son of it, the most Christian King, is as good as turn'd Turk, and worse than all that, is so ungracious, to call his Mother Whore. Not in the Cardinals, for then poor Infallibility wou'd be torn all to pieces, there wou'd be French Infallibility against Spanish Infallibility, and the Zealots Infallibility at Daggers drawing with both. Things being in this posture, we think it very dangerous to interpose in such a Battel-Royal of Creeds, lest they should all agree and fall upon us for Meddlers;— however thus much we'll venture to say, tho' they shou'd threaten us with the H. Inquisition it self, that whenever the poor half Spirit-Cock Fathers agree where to place this rambling Infallibility, it must be either R. Lewis's Gold or R. William's Sword will have the Casting Voice.

Quest. 10. Whether Birds have any Government?

Ans. The Birds, (and they are the Muses Birds) certainly have, and that a very regular one. But lest any shou'd be so unkind to degrade those pretty Creatures into Flies or Insects; we'll instance in some of a little larger Wing. All Birds, and Beasts, and Fishes too, have thus much of Government, that the weaker obeys, and the stronger rules, but still whether there's any other settled Subordination of power amongst 'em we suppose is the Question. 'Tis observ'd in all your Season-Birds, or those which go and come at stated times of the Year, that they fly in Troops, and use a constant order in their Marches, regarding the Wind, and throwing themselves into such a Body as is most convenient either to move against or with it, as their occasions serve. They have, besides their Scouts and advanc'd Guards before to scour the Country, or discover an Enemy; see Bochart de Ciconia— in anim. Sac. And if that does not satisfy, read Bergerack's Super-celestial Navigations, and you'll have the exactest account of their Order, Laws, Government, and manner of living that you can any where meet with.

Quest. 11. I find it reported in a History, that Aeneas liv'd in the days of Abdon Judge of Israel, in the year of the World, 2790, and that Dido was Granddaughter to Ethbaal K. of Sidon



*Sidon and Tyre, whose Daughter Jezabel was married to R. Ahab; so that by this Aeneas must have liv'd long before Dido, and all the Historians and Poets fabulous, in what they relate of their Acquaintance and Amours;— whether of the two is more probable?*

*Ans.* The best Chronologers and Historians on this Question inform us, — That Etibaal, or Itobaal, or Jurbobaal (for by all those names he is call'd) had a Grandson, whose name was Melimus, who had two Sons, Pygmalion and Barcas, and two Daughters, Eliza or Dido, and Anna. That Pygmalion having murdered Sicheus, Dido's Husband for the sake of his Treasure, as Justin and others tell us, Dido in the Seventh Year of his Reign sailed into Afric, and built Carthage, which happened by Computation 143 years after the building of Solomon's Temple, which was about some 289 after the Destruction of Troy, — when Aeneas was in a bad Condition to make a Lover of, for he must have been rotten in his Grave many years before. However, 'tis Injustice to blame the Poet for this mistake in Chronology, which he was not oblig'd to take any care of.

*Quest. 12. Do you believe the Romans in their greatest Power had so many Soldiers as the present French K. suppose it be true what is said, — that he hath four hundred and fifty thousand men, besides all that are obliged to wait upon him by Proclamation, viz. his Militia and Nobles?*

*Ans.* That Computation of four hundred and fifty thousand men, or as some have stretch'd it, five hundred thousand, in the K. of France his Garrisons and Armies, was made when he look'd so big, that the World was almost afraid to think he had less, or question any thing that could be said of his Power; — but now we are got a little nearer him, the Lion is not so dreadful, nor his Guard near so numerous as we then apprehended. Even at the Siege of Mons, when he drew together almost all his Forces, and left his Frontiers to the Rhine quite uncover'd, he amounted not on all that side of the Countrey, even in their own Computation, to much above a hundred thousand, which he was immediately after the place was sold and deliver'd, forc'd to hasten back by long Marches, and a great part of 'em, to the Rhine, Saroy, and other places. — If we consider him at present, — he has not, according to our Gazette, above fifty thousand, but let's suppose it to be 60 now in his Army in Flanders, and yet de Loge is scarce twenty thousand on the Rhine, and finds his Hells his best defence against Saxony. Catinat at most, not thirty thousand in Saroy, whence too he's retiring as fast as he can. — Now shou'd we be so liberal, as to reckon these three Armies together to amount to two hundred thousand, which they do not, by not much above half the number, what shou'd we still do for the other two hundred and fifty thousand, or where shall we find 'em? Not in Garrisons, for at that rate he must have above sixty Garrisons, — each upward of four thousand men, whereas he has drain'd or quitted as many as possible, — not in the Field, where it now most stands him in stead to have 'em, the Turks being on the point of making Peace with the Emperor, if they have not already done it, for want of that Diversion which the Grand Signior's dear Brother and Alliance promised to give the Germans on this side of Europe; and the K. of England pressing him every day with so Vigorous and Numerous an Army, and chasing his best General and all his Forces from one Wood to another, like a parcel of Robbers rather than Soldiers. Thus much of the K. of France's Force, — for that of the Old Romans, at such distance we are not like to get a very exact account of 'em. — That which we produce shall be from good Authors, Dio and Polybins; the first gives us the number of their Legions, the other, of all their Forces, including their Auxiliaries and Allies. Dio tells us, Augustus reduc'd the Legions from twenty five to nineteen or twenty, to which were afterwards added thirteen more, as we find from the Inscription of an old Column given us by Dempster; and by other Princes six more were still added, in all Thirty eight. Now every Legion consisted in the height of the Roman Empire, of Six thousand Foot, and Seven hundred thirty two Horse, sometimes more, which multiply'd by Thirty eight amount to 255816. Add to this their Auxiliaries, which, tho' Dempster tells us, were not so many as their Legions, yet did undoubtedly amount to a much greater number, which appears to any who consult Polybins his account of their general Muster, even before they had subdu'd the Gauls, Britains, or many other Nations, — when invaded by the Gauls under their two Kings, — Concolitanus and Astrovistus, they and the Forces under their Command, and

just within their call, ready to march on occasion, were reckon'd at Seven hundred thousand Foot, and Seventy thousand Horse.

*Quest. 13. In the History of St. Paul's Conversion, 'tis said in the Acts, — "Those that were with him heard the Voice, but saw no Man, cap. 9. v. 7. But, cap. 22. St. Paul says, — "They saw the Light, but heard no Voice. — And in ver. 26. — "They fell down to the Earth: — But in cap. 9. v. 7. — "They stood speechless. — Are not all these Contradictions to each other?*

*Ans.* By no means. — For the First, — A Man may be said to hear, and not to hear the same thing, at the same time; — to hear a Sound, but not distinctly understand the Words. — Thus, when we are at a Sermon, at too great distance from the Preacher, we hear the sound of every Word, and yet truly say we can't hear one Word; that is, distinctly and intelligibly. — Thus exactly it was in the present Case. For the second Difficulty, — How they could see, and not see: — That's yet more easie. — They saw no Man, no Person, no Body, undiv'd, — but they saw a Light; — one of which is far enough from the other. For the Third, — How they fell down, and yet stood speechless: — This too may rationally be accounted for, according to our common way of Expression. "Why stand ye here all the Day idle? is no more than, Why are you idle all the Day? — And we commonly enough, — Do not stand fooling; that is, — Don't fool; — though the Person we address to may be sitting, as well as standing.

*Quest. 15. Who in your Judgment, have wrote clearest and closest concerning the late Revolution?*

*Ans.* There have been so many excellent pieces written on this great Subject, that 'tis not easie, nor perhaps modest to commend one above another, or determine which is best; — and of these, very many, nay, by far the larger part, written by Clergy-men, so little reason have some persons to reflect on the Loyalty of that Great and Learned Body. — The measures of Christian Subjection, &c. one of the first written, seems to go to the very bottom of the Cause. A Dialogue wherein the Judgment of the Reverend — Bishop Sanderson is given and examined in this Subject, is very clear as far as the Lawfulness of our Subjection, Submission and Allegiance to present Government, as are Dr. Sherlock's Reasons, and many others. The Observer, and the Northern Vicar, were at it very early, seem pretty well match'd, and as much of Argument on both sides are in most of what has appear'd on the Subject. There's a little Book said to be Dr. P — g's, which is as clear and home on both Branches, both the de facto and de jure part, as can be desir'd; — and when the Second Part of a late excellent Book, call'd, — God's way of disposing Kingdoms, — comes abroad, those who scruple at Allegiance to the present Government will either be satisfied, or none but a rougher sort of Argument will make 'em so.

*Quest. 15. How cou'd a Serpent speak with the Voice of a Man, as in the History of Eve, when Speech is the Property of Man only?*

*Ans.* While things run on in the ordinary course of Nature we acknowledge Speech is the Incommunicable Property of a Man, but where that holds no longer, neither does this. If the Devil made use of a real Serpent to tempt our first Parents, as most are inclin'd to believe, he might with as much ease also make use of his Organs, or rather form new ones, or perhaps, make words in the Air without any such Organs, to accomplish his Ends.

*Quest. 16. Did Adam lose the Image of God after he had sinned, and what was that Image of his wherein he was made?*

*Ans.* These Questions are near a kin, and their Resolution depends on each other. — We'll begin with the last, — Wherein that Image of God consisted in which Adam was made? We believe it consisted in knowing, willing, and acting, and that all according to the highest perfection of Humane Nature. In knowing, and therein especially in Reason, — in willing, — or that liberty he was then entirely Master of, whereas now he has but a main'd Branch of it left, little more than a sad Liberty to Evil, — and in acting or exercising virtuous Habits, — all which being extremely weaken'd or disac'd by the fall, those few Notices and Ruins of Knowledge, Liberty, and Goodness which yet remain, are rather now a weak and watrish reflexion of that Image, than the same with what was out first, so gloriously enstamp'd upon the Nature of Man.